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STATE FOR INR/R/MR, I/GWHA, WHA, WHA/PDA, WHA/BSC, WHA/EPSC, CDR USSOCOM FOR J-2 IAD/LAMA

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM; 2/10/10; BUENOS AIRES

SUMMARY

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¶1. Argentine media coverage of Iran's nuclear program on 2/10 shifted from covering U.S. and French efforts to sanction Iran to the response from Russia, China, and Brazil. Articles were positive towards Russia's possible support of international sanctions, but also gave a lot of weight to neighboring Brazil's desire to continue diplomatic talks. Second-largest daily La Nacion printed two opinion articles regarding Iran's domestic turmoil and how sanctions may not work. End summary.

REACTION FROM THE EMERGING POWERS

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¶2. Conservative daily Ambito Financiero published an article combining various newswires focusing on China, Russia, and Brazil's reactions. The article highlights Russian Security Council chief's comments that for the first time, "Russia has doubts about [Iran's] peaceful use of atomic energy." However, the article mentions that yet again, China and Brazil were "the exception" to international fear over Iran's motives, quoting Brazilian Foreign Minister saying Brazil "does not want Iran to have nuclear arms" but that Iran "has the right to a peaceful [nuclear] program."

¶3. Left-leaning Buenos Aires Economico had a small article regarding Brazilian President Lula "supporting dialogue with Iran" instead of sanctions, quoting the Brazilian Foreign Minister saying that Brazil has a "tradition of solving items through dialogue." In contrast, the article notes that Italian Prime Minister Berlusconi labeled President Ahmadinejad a "poisonous man" on his trip last week to Israel.

¶4. Centrist Critica's Jerusalem correspondent described how Iran's announcement "unleashed a wave of criticism from the UN Security Council and Israel." The article notes that even Russia, "reluctant to move from diplomacy to punishment" due to its business interests in Iran, is "running out of patience" and moved towards sanctions. President Obama is quoted in the article desiring an "important regiment of sanctions."

[http://criticadigital.com/impresa/index.php?s\\_ecc=nota&nid=38288](http://criticadigital.com/impresa/index.php?s_ecc=nota&nid=38288)

¶5. Largest circulation daily Clarin printed an Agence France-Presse (AFP) newswire about Iran "renewing its challenges

towards the West" and the various international reactions, including from China and Brazil. An article from Britain's The Independent appeared in left-leaning Pagina 12 claiming that while experts "doubt" Iran can enrich uranium to 20%, Iranian President Ahmadinejad "continues betting" that conflict with the West will give him domestic political gain.

<http://www.clarin.com/diario/2010/02/10/elmundo/i-02137083.htm>

<http://www.pagina12.com.ar/diario/elmundo/4-139959-2010-02-10.html>

#### ANALYZING THE IRANIAN CONFLICT

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¶6. Carlos Escude wrote an opinion article in second-largest daily La Nacion highlighting Iran as focal point in an "unstable world" and how sanctions may not be useful. Escude opines that the U.S. needs to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear bomb, but that it is "difficult to imagine" that happening without "unsettling Russia and China." Additionally, while cutting off Iran's import of gasoline would be "the only economic sanction" to make Iran "reverse its suspicious nuclear policy," it only takes "one important country to break the embargo and neutralize the sanctions."

[http://www.lanacion.com.ar/nota.asp?nota\\_id=1231398](http://www.lanacion.com.ar/nota.asp?nota_id=1231398)

¶7. Former Argentina Ambassador to the UN Emilio Cardenas also wrote an opinion article in La Nacion about how the domestic turmoil within Iran is an economic struggle at its root. With Iranian religious institutions ("Bonyad") controlling at least 60% of the economy, the only control private citizens have is in the services sector. However, this sector is slowly being invaded by Bonyad, which is "plagued by subsidies, price controls, and corruption." In addition, the state can invoke religious reasons "to shut off dissent and protests," and thus "assume the role of God's spokesperson...with whom no one can object."

[http://www.lanacion.com.ar/nota.asp?nota\\_id=1231399](http://www.lanacion.com.ar/nota.asp?nota_id=1231399)

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